

Rep. Slaughter has worked hard to draw attention to and eliminate violations of basic human rights of women and children throughout the globe. While in Congress, Rep. Slaughter has worked on many issues affecting international women's human rights, such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, trafficking in women and girls, women and HIV/AIDS, maternal mortality, women and hunger, basic education for girls, and violence against women.

In June 2005, Rep. Slaughter called upon Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to convey the US's serious concern over the Pakistani government's treatment and detention of Mukhtaran Bibi. In 2002, a village council of elders sentenced Mukhtaran Bibi to be gang-raped for the alleged misconduct of her brother. She was then forced to walk home naked in front of a crowd of onlookers. Instead of committing suicide out of shame, which is often the result of rapes in Pakistan, Mukhtaran Bibi became an outspoken advocate for women's rights and challenged the status quo of women in Pakistan by seeking justice. She testified against her perpetrators in court, and six men were convicted. Since those convictions, Ms. Bibi has used her compensation money to start two elementary schools, to purchase a women's shelter, to convert a van into a local ambulance, and continues to speak out against honor killings and rapes of women. Despite great pressure upon her to remain silent, she has traveled abroad to publicize the plight of women in similar situations. As a result of the outspokenness of Rep. Slaughter and others, the government of Pakistan ultimately permitted Mukhtaran Bibi to travel to the US.

In the 108th Congress, Rep. Slaughter led the effort to increase funding levels in the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM add link to <http://www.unifem.org/>). UNIFEM supports innovative programs promoting women's basic human rights and status throughout more than 100 countries. The agency works in partnership with UN organizations, governments and NGOs to reduce women's poverty, end violence against women, halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and support women's roles in conflict prevention and reconstruction efforts. UNIFEM projects promote peace and stability on the ground in many areas of strategic interest to the U.S., such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Columbia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the former Soviet Union. Helping to pave the way from conflict to constitution in Iraq, the organization has supported organizations advocating for women's political rights and participation. UNIFEM has also been working to stem the tide of violence against women throughout the world by administering the Trust Fund to Support Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women.